



**CITY OF GREENSBORO
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



POLICE

Contact: Assistant Chief T. R. Bellamy
574-4035

POLICE INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS LOITERING ISSUES IN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

GREENSBORO, NC (May 25, 2004) – The Greensboro Police Department (GPD), in collaboration with the City of Greensboro's Local Ordinance Enforcement Division, Finance Department Collections Division, the newly formed Bessemer / Summit Merchants Association, and major commercial property owners will launch a three month initiative on June 1, 2004 aimed at addressing the issues of panhandling, vagrancy, and begging. Operation Bessemer and Summit Enhancement (BASE) will use education, police visibility, and enforcement to stabilize commercial / business properties and shopping centers from the 700 to 1200 block of Summit Avenue, as well as the 700 to 1200 block of East Bessemer Avenue.

"This area has become a haven for panhandlers, vagrants, and beggars," said Assistant Chief Tim Bellamy, Commanding Officer of Eastern Operations. "Citizens are reluctant to come to the area to shop, dine, and conduct business because of these issues. Through Operation BASE, we intend to make a positive change in the community," he added.

During the three month period, police community resource team officers, along with tax revenue officers, will educate the public, business owners / managers, and potential violators on local ordinances pertaining to panhandling, solicitation, and privilege license. To catch violators of the ordinances, foot and bike patrols, as well as undercover officers will be used. Tax revenue officers will be on-site to examine panhandlers' documents for proper licenses.

The City of Greensboro works in partnership with the community to build an increased quality of life for all residents by fostering an environment where inclusion, diversity, and trust are valued. As the seventh largest employer in Greensboro, the City has a dedicated professional staff of more than 2700 employees who maintain four core values of honesty, integrity, stewardship, and respect. The City of Greensboro is governed by a council-manager form of government where a mayor and eight council members act as the legislative body. For more information on the City of Greensboro, please visit us on line at www.greensboro-nc.gov.

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